VICE DETECTED,

AND

Virtue Recommended;

Under the Influence of

SUNDAY-SCHOOLS.

By JOSHUA BRIGGS, *of* BAILDON.

"CHILDREN, OUR KIND PROTECTION CLAIM,
"AND GOD WILL WELL APPROVE,
"WHEN INFANTS LEARN TO LISP HIS NAME,
"AND THEIR CREATOR LOVE."

LEEDS:

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M.DCC.LXXXVIII.

An HYMN.

HOW tedious and taſteleſs the hours,
When Jeſus no longer I ſee;
Sweet proſpects, ſweet birds, and ſweet flow'rs,
Have all loſt their ſweetneſs with me:
The mid-ſummer ſun ſhines but dim,
The fields ſtrive in vain to look gay;
But when I am happy in him,
December's as pleaſant as May.

His name yields the richeſt perfume,
And ſweeter than muſic his voice;
His preſence diſperſes my gloom,
And makes all within me rejoice;
I ſhould, were he always thus nigh,
Have nothing to wiſh or to fear;
No mortal ſo happy as I,
My ſummer would laſt all the year.

Content with beholding his face,
My All to his pleaſure reſign'd;
No changes of ſeaſon or place,
Would make any change in my mind:
While bleſs'd with a ſenſe of his love,
A palace a toy would appear;
And priſons would palaces prove,
If Jeſus would dwell with me there.

Dear Lord, if indeed I am thine,
If thou art my ſun and my ſong;
Say, Why do I languiſh and pine,
And why are my winters ſo long?
O drive theſe dark clouds from my ſky,
Thy ſoul-chearing preſence reſtore;
Or take me unto thee on high,
Where winter and clouds are no more.

VICE DETECTED, &c.

AS perſons who live and labour, in the moſt private ſituation, have a turn of mind peculiar to themſelves, and make ſome obſervations in common with others, and more ſo thoſe who have occaſion to travel much, and converſe freely with mankind; ſo I, having occaſion to travel in and through many of the towns, villages and hamlets, ſituate in a part of the country which is very populous, have made ſeveral obſervations reſpecting the conduct of children and young perſons; the vicious manner in which many of them are trained up, and the different conſequences ariſing from a good or a bad education.

The propagation of SUNDAY-SCHOOLS in various places, and the methods taken in them, for the inſtruction of poor children and orphans, and indeed others of maturer age, are ſo well adapted to, and have already ſuch a general influence on them, that one would be almoſt ready to think every unprejudiced perſon muſt ſee the uſefulneſs of them; and with this view I have attempted (though in a weak manner) to lay before the impartial reader the following narration and appeal to the public, which chiefly conſiſts of obſervations and remarks drawn from the ſacred ſcriptures, and undeniable matter of fact. Notwithſtanding the different ſentiments of various denominations of people, and the diſputes which have ariſen, and do ariſe daily, about points and opinions in matters of religion, the lip of inſpiration has commanded us to *Train up a child in the way he ſhould go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.* Certainly, that humane Gentleman, who was the author of *Sunday-Schools*, was animated with a due ſenſe of this paſſage, and was deeply convinced of the abſolute need of putting into practice this poſitive command, while he contrived that be-

nevolent ſcheme. One may now walk through thoſe towns, on a Sabbath-day, where ſuch ſchools are continued, and ſcarce ſee a child in the ſtreets above the age of five years. How widely different is ſuch a proſpect as this, and much more commendable and praiſe-worthy, than that of ſeeing them trifling about the ſtreets, and hearing them utter vain oaths upon every frivolous occaſion, inſomuch that the peaceable traveller could ſcarce paſs without being accoſted in the moſt obſcene language. How often have mine ears been diſagreeably entertained, with the vile invectives, blaſphemous imprecations, and ridiculous abſurdities uttered by this infantile race; and what is yet more aſtoniſhing, I have heard ſome of thoſe little ones, even curſe their parents with ſuch an effrontery, as plainly indicated their want of correction and proper diſcipline. But this is not all: thoſe who live, or have the opportunity to be at a ſmall diſtance from any conſiderable trading town, or village, where there are no ſuch ſchools (eſpecially in the ſpring of the year, or ſummer) may ſee ſcores of them, roving about, in bye-ways, lanes, hedges, fields and woods; like ſilly ſtraying ſheep, without a ſhepherd; tearing their few remaining rags from off their bodies: ſome of them employed in vain ſports, and idle amuſements; others wantonly breaking down and deſtroying private property; and not a few, perhaps, plundering the gardens, orchards and fields of the laborious huſbandman, at the very time he is in the public worſhip of God, to ſatisfy the cravings of an hungry belly: and at night returning home to their careleſs owners, almoſt ſtarved to death for want of the neceſſaries of life.

But ſome may be ready to ſay, *This is carrying matters too far, and in ſpeaking thus I go beyond the bounds of reaſon and truth.* To all ſuch objectors I beg leave to put this queſtion: Suppoſe I could produce a thouſand witneſſes, who would all concur with me in vindication of theſe aſſertions, would you believe them? Would you give credit to their unexceptionable

ceptionable teſtimony? Perhaps not; and this may be one reaſon why an univerſal reformation, among theſe little-ones does not take place. But in order to convince you that theſe obſervations are not mere fancies, but ſerious realities, and the cauſes of them big with pernicious conſequences, take a walk to the common jails and priſons; converſe a little with the priſoners and felons about the original cauſe of their confinement, and if they chuſe to ſpeak the truth, will they not ſay, that the profanation of the Sabbath, was a prelude to their prodigality and thievery, and the forerunner of almoſt every other ſpecies of external evil? But if this method ſhould prove too weak (for perſons of this deſcription, and uncondemned, in order to avoid the puniſhment due to their crimes, will ſeldom make any confeſſion) take a turn to the condemned holds, proceed from thence to the gallows; there you may hear the poor condemned malefactors uttering their laſt dying ſpeeches, and in doleful lamentations accuſing themſelves for Sabbath-breaking firſt, and then they will give you to underſtand, that from ſuch a pernicious practice, they broke out into thoſe of pilfering and ſtealing: and as *ſtolen waters are ſweet, and bread eaten in ſecret is pleaſant, they did not conſider that the dead were there*, until by woeful experience they found that the *end of ſuch things is death.*

But, is there any neceſſity for ſuch a conduct as this, in the preſent riſing generation? Are there any ſo weak as to ſuppoſe that the God of order, and juſtice, has laid the children of men under an impoſſibility of doing otherwiſe? Are there not (now in particular) places appointed, and proviſion made, for the preſervation of youth, and inſtruction of the ignorant and thoſe that are out of the way (more eſpecially as it ſtands in connexion with, and affects civil ſociety?) There are, and to ſuch places the poor, illiterate, uncultivated children may go, and be ſafe from thoſe dangerous and broad ways of vanity, in which they have ſo often been found wandering, and (if the maſters or overſeers of ſuch places,

are men of ſincerity, uprightneſs and integrity) be taught to read the Sacred Word of the Lord, which is able (through Divine Grace) to make them wiſe unto ſalvation.

How much more beneficial is ſuch an employment as this, for young perſons, than that of the practice of thouſands, who, though ſuch ſchools are inſtituted, and free liberty proclaimed throughout the kingdom for them to come and welcome, notwithſtanding refuſe to give their attendance. How applicable are the words of Chriſt, to the lawyers, in this caſe, where he ſays, *Ye entered not in yourſelves, and thoſe that were entering in ye hindered. Beware therefore, leſt that come upon you which is ſpoken of in the Prophets, Behold, ye deſpiſers, and wonder and periſh: for I work a work in your days, a work which you ſhall in no wiſe believe, though a man declare it unto you.*

How frequently may one ſee numbers of both ſexes, from the age of ſixteen to twenty, and upwards (on Sunday evening) uſing all their efforts to inveigle each other into ſin and wickedneſs, laſciviouſneſs and fornication. Theſe young Manaſſehs, and Magdalenes, ſhould you reprove them, would, no doubt, give you to underſtand, that they are wiſer in their own eyes than ſeven men that can render a reaſon, though many of them be utter ſtrangers to the Word of God, and the ſacred import of his tremendous law! Let them alone a few days, and you may ſee ſome of them brought to a ſort of repentance (which is not unto life) for the commiſſion of crimes ſcarce decent to mention, and againſt which the law of God denounces a ſolemn curſe.

But will not ſome here alſo, object and ſay, *This is carrying the matter too far; and though it be allowed that ſuch misfortunes happen now and then, they are but ſeldom?* Let all ſuch objectors (if they wiſh to be truly informed herein) conſult the pariſh officers, and magiſtrates, and the civil courts of juſtice, held and maintained for the purpoſe of regulating, and bringing to juſtice, the perpetrators of ſuch groſs enormities;

mities: theſe can furniſh them with volumes of the black catalogue, a thouſand times darker than can be ſet forth by my illiterate pen. Laſtly, Enquire of that deſerted, forlorn, deſpiſed young woman, who is making her humble ſupplications to the pariſh officers for a little maintenance, in order to ſupport the illegitimate and fatherleſs infant in her lap. The inexperienced mother knows not how to bring up, or educate this helpleſs creature; but the poor orphan (born like the wild aſs's colt) comes into the world in its original impurity, and inſtead of having the inſtructions of a wiſe and prudent father, to conduct it in the right way, is uſually left to follow the vain imaginations of a deſperately wicked and deceitful heart.

One would be ready to ſay, Where is the unnatural father of this unfortunate child? Perhaps, frighted with his own image before he had the opportunity to ſee it, in this his offspring, he has fled his country, and though purſued by the lawful officers of the pariſh, is not to be found. Is this the reſpect he pretended to have for his miſtreſs, the partner of his crimes? and the wiſdom he ſo much boaſted of, who, for the ſake of gratifying an inordinate luſt, has baſely bartered his native country, and deprived the fooliſh unthinking creature of her virgin-innocency, and, conſequently, of the privilege which might have come to her by a ſuitable and happy marriage? I ſay, is this his wiſdom? Behold he has given proof of it, by truſting to his heels, rather than his hands; intending, by flight, to ſecure himſelf from the reach of juſtice, and from that ſhame, which is ſo cloſely connected with the commiſſion of ſuch crimes: but, though this wretched expedient may ſerve a bad purpoſe for a time, it cannot ſcreen him from that vengeance which undoubtedly awaits him, and will be executed upon all ſuch, without true repentance, either in time, or in eternity.

O, ye wanton ſtriplings of our day, who are already guilty of ſuch atrocious crimes! is this a true

draught

draught of your picture (as drawn above) and are you unconcerned about it? Suppoſe you can, for a time, elude the puniſhment of an earthly judge, you cannot eſcape the ſentence of him, who will judge both the quick and dead. Some of you ſeldom hear the word of the Lord preached, read or expounded; and if, through curioſity, you get within the gates of the church-yard, and your curioſity leads you (ſtill further) to go into the church, perhaps when divine ſervice is half over, your bit of time, while there, is generally ſpent to no good purpoſe: *To ſee and be ſeen*, to jeſt and make ſport of every thing praiſe-worthy, ſacred and divine, is the chief of your employ: Witneſs ye pious living, and ye pious dead! Witneſs thou meridian ſun! how irreligion and profaneneſs ſtalk about, even when the broad eye of nature is wide open, and upon the very threſhold of the ſanctuary of God!

The miniſter may reaſon with you about righteouſneſs, temperance and judgment to come, yet what does it avail! Young as you are, you appear to be proof againſt all admonitions and entreaties whatever. O ye ſtout-hearted, and far from righteouſneſs! did a Felix tremble, while the great apoſtle was reaſoning with the people, upon ſuch as the afore-mentioned ſubjects, and have you no concern? Do you imagine, that a few prayers, extorted through fear, in a dying hour will ſerve the purpoſe? O no! at that awful period, living and dying in ſuch a ſtate, your vain hopes, and expectations will be cut off by a fearful looking-for of judgment, and that fiery indignation, which will devour you as the adverſaries of God: your moſt ſecret ſins will then be laid open to a whole aſſembled world; and the curſes of a broken law will hold you under arreſt till you have paid the uttermoſt farthing. Or do you alſo imagine you can eſcape juſtice then, as you do now? No; that Omnipotent, Omnipreſent and Omniſcient Being, whoſe laws you have violated, whoſe goſpel, and the ordinances thereof, you have perpetually ſlighted, will then be fully avenged of you for all the injuries done to, and indignities,

dignities, caſt upon his government and people, while in your probationary ſtate on earth. O, conſider, and take warning, while time is! before the hour of death; before the day of judgment: while the goſpel ſhines forth in our land; while health and ſtrength are permitted you; and above all, while there is a Mediator upon a throne of mercy, who is yet making interceſſion for tranſgreſſors.

But, a word to the female ſex, who ſuffer themſelves to be the eaſy prey of theſe libidinous youths. O, ye immodeſt fair ones, who are the weaker part of God's rational creation, and therefore claim a larger ſhare of pity, in compaſſion to your manifold weakneſſes, permit me to remind you of your enemies, and the probable way of eſcape. How much better would it be for you to ſpend the ſacred Sabbath, in frequenting the public worſhip of God, reading his holy word, and ſinging his praiſes, than be found in connexion with the perſons and practice abovementioned. Had you not better fall into the hands of a highway-man than be overcome by ſuch as theſe? for he, perhaps, would only rob you of your money; but theſe, after they have ſatisfied an inordinate luſt, often ſeek to take away your precious lives, in order to prevent the ſhameful conſequences following. Do not ſuppoſe this is mere conjecture; matter of fact abundantly proves the melancholy truth was it neceſſary, one might produce more than a hundred inſtances where this has been the caſe, and the attempts made in this way are, perhaps, more numerous than moſt people imagine.

Again, are not many of you driven into the marriage-ſtate by ſhameful neceſſity, and obliged to live the remaining part of your days, in connexion with ſuch inhuman brutes as bear you neither love nor good will? Nor is this the worſt, for, many of them, after they have ſolemnly joined hands with you, before the miniſter, at the ſacred altar, are no ſooner diſmiſſed from the place, than they act as if they were at full liberty to ſhake off every obligation laid upon

upon them there, and frequently leave you, with a helpleſs infant, to ſtarve, in a ſtate, not much better than that of abject ſlavery! If this has not often been the caſe, and is to this preſent time; if there are not examples of it almoſt in every town and village, *Who will make me a liar, and make my ſpeech nothing worth?*

You who are already overcome, and inſnared, by theſe bewitching crimes, or have run wilfully into them, of your own choice, your caſe is truly deplorable: what is paſt, in this reſpect, cannot be recalled: Does it not then eſpecially concern you, to make application to him who *pardoneth iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin?* Like penitent Magdalene, go to the feet of Chriſt, and implore a pardon. *She that liveth in (carnal) pleaſure, is dead while ſhe liveth,* yet the ever-bleſſed Jeſus came to give life to the world, even to thoſe who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins: brought life and immortality to light by the glorious goſpel: and this friend of ſinners *is the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever*; therefore ſeek him in the means which he has appointed. There is mercy with him, that he may be feared, and plenteous redemption that he may be ſought unto. He (under the character of an high-prieſt) can have compaſſion on the ignorant, and on thoſe that are out of the way. Remember that affair of the woman taken in adultery; when Jeſus had put her accuſers to ſilence, he ſaid unto her, *Hath no man condemned thee? She ſaid, No man, Lord. And Jeſus ſaid unto her, Neither do I condemn thee; go, and ſin no more.* How benign and friendly is the Saviour! What encouragement is this for poor ſinners! and how exhilarating muſt it be to the broken-hearted! His interrogations are familiar, his affirmation merciful, and his concluſion inſtructive: therefore liſten to his expoſtulations with attention, receive his mercy with thankfulneſs, and be obedient to his bleſſed commands.

You who are yet out of the ſnare of the fowler, in this

this ſenſe, and are riſing from a ſtate of infancy to mature age, let virtue be your inſeparable companion. Seek that wiſdom which comes from above, that you may be preſerved from the craft and ſubtilty of brutiſh men, and the malice of evil ſpirits. You are under an indiſpenſible neceſſity to petition indulgent heaven, for the aids of divine grace, to keep you (in the bloom of life) from the frequented paths of ſin and folly, in which ſo many have walked, and have been utterly ruined. You can never be ſufficiently thankful that you have the ſacred ſcriptures to read, and alſo ſuch opportunities for improving yourſelves in the ſame, to ſome degree of perfection: Be adviſed to embrace theſe opportunities while they are offered you. How many old people do we frequently hear lamenting the follies of their youth, having ſquandered away their precious moments in various amuſements to no purpoſe, they now cannot read thoſe ſacred pages, if it would adminiſter to them ever ſo much comfort and ſatisfaction. What can be ſaid that may be inſtrumental for your good? Do you value your beauty? Have you a higher eſtimation of yourſelves on this account (though but an outward ornament?) well then, in order to preſerve it, preſerve chaſtity, and walk in the paths of virtue. Does a beautiful object give you pleaſure and delight? If ſo, view the Lord of Life and Glory, repreſented in his holy word as being *fairer than the children of men.* Does a loving object engage your attention? Are you allured with the charms of this paſſion? Then I will venture to ſay, you can never have ſo ſuitable an object as Chriſt, who is *lovelier than the ſons of men: yea, he is altogether lovely.*

But, perhaps, it may be an object different from any of theſe, which is the idol of your hearts, and uppermoſt in your thoughts and converſation, viz. a too punctilious regard for the outward decoration of your bodies: If this be the caſe, give me leave to addreſs you in the following language: *Hearken, O*

daughter,

daughter; and conſider, and incline thine ear; forget alſo (the fooliſh cuſtoms of) *thine own people, and thy father's houſe: ſo ſhall the king greatly deſire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord, and worſhip thou him. The king's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold. She ſhall be brought unto the king in raiment of needle-work: the virgins, her companions, that follow her, ſhall be brought unto thee: with gladneſs and rejoicing ſhall they be brought; they ſhall enter into the king's palace.*

Theſe heavenly qualifications would I recommend to each of you, for your moſt ſerious conſideration: for, being thus beautified, and adorned, with the graces of the ſpirit of your elder Brother, who is, and ever will be, the church's head and huſband, you may ſtand with boldneſs, at death and judgment, and the ſhame of your nakedneſs will not appear. But as for you of both ſexes, into whoſe hands theſe few undeniable truths may fall, who are in the bloom of life, and vigour of youth, and are determined to walk according to the courſe of the world, after the ſight of your own eyes, and the vain imaginations of your own hearts; adding ſin to ſin, perfidy to luſt, &c. deſpiſing all the prudent helps, and appointed means for your good, both external and internal; you may, for a time, enjoy the pleaſures of ſenſe, and feed upon the fancies and deluſions of your deceived hearts, till your iniquities have incloſed you on every ſide; but when ſin is finiſhed it bringeth forth death, and remember, *That for all theſe things God will bring you into judgment.*

I will now take leave of the perſons above deſcribed, and come more immediately to the ſubject I had in view, when I firſt took up my pen, namely, *Sunday-Schools.* Though there are many already inſtituted, in various places, alas! what a pity it is there ſhould be a town, or village, of any conſiderable bulk, without ſuch. But ſome, perhaps, will ſay, *What are thoſe ſchools we hear ſo much of; and how are they governed?*—For the information

of

of every well-meaning enquirer, I will, in as brief a manner as poſſible, lay before you the methods taken, and the rules made uſe of, at a certain ſchool of this kind, where I have had the opportunity to be many times preſent; and being both eye and ear witneſs, can relate as matter of fact:

Firſt. The fame and utility of *Sunday-Schools*, ſpreading far and wide, tidings thereof reached the ears of many well-diſpoſed perſons in the town, where the aforementioned ſchool has ſince been eſtabliſhed: Children, in this place, being very numerous, and alſo much corrupted in their manners and morals, a conſultation among theſe perſons immediately took place; when, after ſeveral mature deliberations, a body of ſixteen men offered their voluntary ſervices, as teachers, without any ſiniſter or pecuniary motives whatſoever. Accordingly, a place was appointed, in which any number of ſcholars, not exceeding two hundred, might be conveniently taught. The next thing neceſſary to be conſidered, was to have theſe teachers ſo connected to each other, and alſo to the ſchool, as that the ſcholars ſhould never be deſtitute of a proper number to teach and inſtruct them in ſuch reading, and other uſeful learning, as the nature of their circumſtances required: and as the number of ſcholars who attended at firſt, was not very great, theſe teachers further agreed to divide themſelves into four equal companies, for the benefit of the children, by preſerving a change, and alſo for the eaſe and convenience of themſelves, that they might not be overmuch burdened and confined. Therefore four of theſe men attended each day by rotation, for ſome time, till, by an amazing increaſe of ſcholars, they were obliged to double the number, but ſtill they preſerve the ſame order as at the beginning. Beſide theſe, there are two or three occaſional teachers, and alſo a proper perſon to inſpect the behaviour of the children, while in the ſchool; and to give ſuch ſuitable reproof and correction, as that good order may be kept during ſchool hours; alſo to take care that each of them aſk proper leave to go out, when they

have occaſion, and ſee that they return in due time, inſtead of playing about the ſtreets.

Touching the manner in which it is further carried on, take as follows:

The ſchool is begun with ſinging about half-a-dozen ſtanzas of a pſalm, or hymn, or ſometimes a ſhort anthem, proper for the purpoſe, and adapted to the capacities of the children. As moſt of them have voices ſuitable, and alſo an inclination for this part of angelic worſhip, they need very little intreating to join with each other in full chorus; alſo this noble employ, being firſt, has a tendency to ſtrike an awe upon their minds during the whole of their ſtay, which is about two hours and a half in the forenoon, and nearly the ſame in the after. They have, generally, ſinging at the beginning and end of each of theſe times, and ſometimes in the middle: after reading and ſpelling four or five leſſons each day, they conclude at night with a ſhort prayer. Moreover, if, during ſchool-hours, any diſorder or uneaſineſs ariſes, an univerſal ſilence is enjoined; each ſcholar (as the heart of one man) prepares to give due attention to what they may be called unto; and perhaps another verſe of an hymn is ſung, in order to ſettle and compoſe the minds of theſe young creatures, without that ſevere correction, which would ſcarce be decent upon a Sabbath-day, and which is too commonly uſed without the deſired ſucceſs. Thus, by intermingling praiſes, reading and prayer, theſe little ones are ſo captivated, that many of them loſe, for a time, that frothy emptineſs which is ſo common to boys and girls, and ſo pernicious to ſchools in general: What a bleſſing would it be if they found it no more for ever!

With regard to their improvement in reading and ſpelling, it is truly aſtoniſhing. Some, who but a few months ago, did not even know the names of the letters, can now read tolerably well in the bible: (ſuch are here meant as have not the opportunity of going to a ſchool on the week-days.) Theſe poor neglected creatures (for ſo were many of them) are

ſo

ſo elevated with the thoughts of their Sunday's employ, that ſome of them ſcarce take their neceſſary repoſe, but riſe earlier on that morning than they were wont to do, in time paſt, by ſeveral hours: yea, it has cauſed ſuch an emulation among them, that they ſeize, with avidity, every opportunity for improving themſelves in theſe uſeful and neceſſary attainments. To cloſe theſe few obſervations, permit me to ſay (which is a real truth) that the four ſmall companies of men above-mentioned, together with the occaſional helpers, aſſiſted by unerring wiſdom (like Gideon's little army with their pitchers and lamps) have put to flight whole legions of infernal evils, ſuch as Sabbath-breaking, vain-ſwearing, lying, pilfering, ſtealing, gaming, idleneſs and ignorance; with thouſands of other baneful crimes, too tedious to mention, and too numerous for the narrow limits of a ſmall pamphlet.

Now, as children who have never been at a ſchool, for their inſtruction and improvement in good manners and morality (eſpecially thoſe who have had little or no reſtraint from their parents) are often diſobedient, ungovernable, and wicked (and of this ſort were ſome of theſe) it was thought neceſſary to compile a few rules for their obſervance and diſcipline; and as theſe rules have been attended with ſucceſs in one place, by inſerting them here, they may be of uſe to the public in general, and children in particular, who may be induced to read and conſider them, as for their own advantage, ſo alſo for that of their parents and teachers. I will not ſay they comprehend every thing needful; far from it: yet I may venture to affirm, that every thing contained in them is abſolutely neceſſary to the well-maintaining of a *Sunday-School*; and whoever are admitted into theſe ſchools, and do not think it their duty to obſerve the eaſy injunctions they ſet forth, are undeſerving the privileges thereof, and ought rather to be excluded, leſt their bad examples ſhould gain too great an influence over the reſt.

Theſe are the Rules which follow:

Firſt. That each ſcholar ſhall be preſent at the

time appointed by their maſters, with their hands and faces clean waſhed, their hair well combed, and as decent in their apparel as their circumſtances will allow.

2. That each ſcholar ſhall pay a due reſpect to their parents, maſters, and ſuperiors; to one-another, and to all mankind, at all times, and in all places.

3. That their manner of coming to, continuance in, and going from ſchool, ſhall be peaceable, modeſt and grave.

4. That they ſhall readily, willingly and chearfully obey all the reaſonable commands of their maſters: ſpeak when called upon, and be ſilent when commanded, without murmuring, repining, or diſcontent.

5. That whiſpering, tale-telling, falſe accuſation of one-another to their maſters, &c. ſhall not be permitted.

6. That they ſhall not tear or injure the books put into their hands, in the time of their attendance, but ſhall carefully return them to their maſters at the expiration of ſchool hours.

7. That they ſhall not abſent themſelves from ſchool upon vain pretences, or deſire to be diſmiſſed one before another: but when it happens that any of them are detained, or have occaſion to requeſt permiſſion to go home, they ſhall be ready and willing to give a true and faithful account of themſelves, bringing with them their parents, maſters, or guardians, to prove their innocency (in order to prevent lying and wicked prevarication) if required by their ſaid maſters.

8. That no child or children, ſcholar or ſcholars, ſhall be admitted into the ſchool, nor continued therein, who are given to ſtealing, lying, ſwearing, Sabbath-breaking, &c. or the reading and ſinging of ſuch debauched ballads and ſongs, as tend to the encouraging of vice and corrupting of youth, except upon promiſe of a thorough reformation.

9. That, whereas many of our ſaid ſcholars, who by reaſon of age and ſtrength, are capable of working at ſome buſineſs or calling, *Be it remembered*, That ſuch ſhall, from day to day, perform and do all the reaſonable and daily work aſſigned them by their parents, maſters, &c. and if ſent upon any needful errand,

errand, ſhall not ſtay loitering by the way, but return, in due time, to their reſpective employments.

10. That as many of thoſe children, as ſhall ſet themſelves duly to obſerve theſe rules, ſhall be carefully taught reading and ſpelling, in the neweſt and beſt methods now extant, to the utmoſt of our power, without fee or reward. But if there be any ſo preſumptuous and wicked as to thruſt themſelves in among our ſaid ſcholars, with no other view than that of curioſity, or to laugh and make ſport of the profitable inſtitution; who do not ſet themſelves to obſerve theſe rules, nor can with any degree of argument and reaſonable correction be taught to obſerve them; then the preſent maſters ſhall have power and authority to examine and try over ſuch refractory children, and reprove them accordingly: if they take reproof, well; if not, they ſhall be expelled from all the benefits and privileges of the ſaid ſchool.

Theſe rules, or ſome others of the like kind, muſt be properly attended to, and put in practice, otherwiſe diſorder and confuſion will undoubtedly enſue: for many will attend out of mere curioſity; and tho' they may be charmed, for a time, with the power of ſound, and other amiable qualifications, in the decent and peaceable part of the ſcholars, yet ſuch, not being accuſtomed to any kind of diſcipline (ſave the inſtigations and allurements of their wicked companions) will brook no reſtraint, but will corrupt others and entice them to diſobedience: and indeed many ſuch there are, who fooliſhly ſport away the moſt uſeful part of their years, knowing nothing ſo well as how to make light of that which moſt deſerves their imitation and eſteem; not conſidering the dreadful import of this ſcripture, *Judgments are prepared for ſcorners, and ſtripes for the back of fools.*

Having given the reader a conciſe account of the conduct of children and young perſons, and the fatal conſequences of a bad education, with a deſcription of a *Sunday-School*, &c. I beg leave to ſubjoin a few particulars deducible from the whole.

With regard to *Sunday-Schools*, I cannot but reflect

with pleaſure that ſuch a charitable expedient was thought of: that the gracious and wiſe Diſpoſer of all Events, ſhould condeſcend to gather together ſuch numbers of poor orphans, and place them at the feet of their teachers, ready and willing to receive from them any inſtruction they are capacitated for, and which their maſters are of ability to give.—But I muſt confeſs, what has been already laid down, with reſpect to the utility of *Sunday-Schools* in general, and this above deſcribed in particular, is greatly deficient: Alas! I am far from being equal to the taſk: had the pen of a *Virgil* been employed on the ſubject, it might have received juſtice. Would it not have been an honour to a *Milton*, or a *Young*, to have had ſuch a theme for their amuſement?

Ye lovers of pleaſure, more than God, who count it ſport to riot in the day-time, and eſteem the day of the Lord a wearifome day, ſaying, *When will the Sabbath be over*; becauſe on that day you are reſtrained from ſinging the ſongs of the drunkard; O come and behold! *Out of the mouths of babes and ſucklings God can perfect praiſe.*—Their infant lips, inſpired with gratitude, chant forth the high praiſes of God their Redeemer, and the bleſſed incarnation of Immanuel, while yours are too commonly employed in the lewd ſong, the obſcene jeſt, and other impure ſpeeches, enough to make a ſenſible Heathen bluſh, and which plainly demonſtrates you are in the broad way leading down to the chambers of death, and will ſhortly arrive there without a ſpeedy reformation.—Do you love to regale yourſelves with high-raiſed ſonnets? Are you captivated with the bewitching ſounds of the tabor, pipe and harp, tho' merely uſed as inſtruments for the purpoſe of conveying more of the baneful poiſon of ballads, and lewd ſongs, into the hearts and memories of the children of men? Thoſe infants far exceed you: their language is, *Hoſanna, bleſſed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hoſanna in the higheſt!* Your ſtrains are, perhaps, but fumes ariſing from the midnight bowl, which in the end (like an immoderate

doſe

doſe of opium) ſo benumbs your ſenſes, and ſtupifies your reaſon, that (to ſay the beſt) you are the exact repreſentation of the image of death, and would be glad of the filthieſt place in the ſtreet for a bed, till the deceitful potion has a little evaporated from your brain.—You have nothing in your diverſions equal to theirs:

For this believe not me, no man believe;
Truſt not in words, but deeds.

Frequent ſuch a ſchool as this above deſcribed; there you may hear numbers of them uniting their voices, in ſome ſuch language as the following:

I hate to hear a wanton ſong,
Their words offend my ears;
I ſhould not dare defile my tongue,
With language ſuch as theirs.

Away from fools I'll turn mine eyes,
Nor with the ſcoffers go;
I would be walking with the wiſe,
That wiſer I may grow.

But a word to the principal inhabitants of places where there are no *Sunday-Schools* as yet.

Do you frequently complain of the ravages and diſorders, committed by miſchievous children, on the Sabbath-day?—Is Sabbath-breaking (like a portentous comet) the forerunner of numberleſs evils, and pregnant with many fatal conſequences? Do you, at the ſame time, give preference to thoſe ſchools, as knowing they are productive of much good, to Individuals—Families—Neighbourhoods—Towns and Cities, and to the Nation at large: That they will have a tendency to make the children, who are there educated, good children; good and truſty ſervants; prompt in every relative and ſocial duty; uſeful members of civil ſociety; uſeful to their country and their gracious King; and, above all, uſeful to themſelves, as thoſe that muſt give account to the Kings of Kings, for the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or whether they be evil: O, then ſet about the matter immediately, with a ſpirit of pity and benevolence to thoſe poor unthinking creatures! Ye Patriots; ye Philanthropiſts; ye feeling-hearted Parents, and Chriſtian Men, of every denomination, uſe your every effort, ſtretch forth every nerve, to bring about ſuch a glorious reformation! Where are bowels of compaſſion? Where is that

ſympathizing pity, ſo eminently diſplayed by the great Redeemer, in the days of his humiliation, when he uttered this pathetic ſentence? *Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of ſuch is the kingdom of heaven!* Can they be brought any nearer to him, by human wiſdom, than by frequenting his ordinances, reading his holy word, calling upon him by prayer, and ſinging his praiſes, upon his own ſanctified day?

To you, who are inſtrumental in promoting thoſe ſchools, by your charitable contributions, what thanks muſt be due, from the inhabitants of thoſe places where your generoſity is ſo eminently diſplayed. What ideas ſoever the parents of thoſe children, that are educated under the influence of your benevolent hands, may have of it, it is certain you can never do them a greater kindneſs, or ſhew more compaſſion to their offſpring. Go on, ye true Patriots of our nation (for you beſt deſerve that name) till the effect of *Sunday-Schools* becomes univerſal: till impudence and obſcenity for ever hide their brazen heads: then by a continuation of theſe unparallelled favours, you will, no doubt, have the pleaſure and ſatisfaction to reflect, that you have reſcued thouſands of thoſe heedleſs ſufferers from a ſtate of the moſt profound ignorance and impiety. Although this may appear (at preſent) ſmall in the eyes of ſome, and ſeem of very little conſequence; yet to you, I hope, it appears of infinite moment: and though theſe favours may be very little noticed, by the generality, yet the ſucceeding generations will have abundant reaſon to bleſs your ſacred memories, as the effect of them may continue to the lateſt poſterity.

You children, and young perſons, who frequent theſe ſchools for your improvement, and for whoſe ſakes this weak attempt is chiefly intended: you are the likelieſt part of the creation to receive the benefit ariſing from them: Suffer me, then (as one who cordially wiſhes your welfare) to admoniſh you of one thing, namely, that your improvement be equal to the privileges you thereby enjoy: this you can do no other way ſo well, as by a good and ſuitable beha-

viour. Of all the impediments in the way of *Sunday-Schools*, none are ſo pernicious as the noiſes and uneaſineſs of the ſcholars. Was there an intire ſtillneſs, in theſe places, with all but ſuch as are reading, their improvement would be ten-fold to what it is where this is not the caſe. Do you not read that *Rebellion* (and conſequently diſobedience) *is as the ſin of witchcraft; but to obey is better than ſacrifice?* Does not the fifth command teach you to honour your father and mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God giveth you? You cannot honour your parents, and, at the ſame time, be diſobedient to your teachers and benefactors. Is it not alſo written, *He that being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroyed, and that without remedy?* Muſt the claſhing of rods, and the ſound of reproof, be a perpetual annoyance in the ſchool, or the Houſe of God, on that day which is ſet apart for ſacred reſt, and pious uſes? Do not thoſe who diſturb the tranquility of the place, by their repeated noiſes and uneaſineſs (for to ſuch I appeal) as much as in their power lies, turn the gathering of themſelves together, in the Houſe of God, into a civil war, and the Day of the Lord, into a day of battle? If theſe interrogations are undeniable truths, muſt not every diſobedient child ſhudder at the awful conſequence, and reſolve, for the future, to be diſobedient no more? In ſhort, if it is kept in a place of worſhip, the ſolemnity of the place; the excellence of the undertaking; the ſacred day on which it is performed; the truths, which are ſo often read and repeated; the praiſes of God which are ſung in ſuch evangelical language; and above all, the omniſciency of that awful Being, who is every where preſent; all, all proclaim, Be ſolid, ſerious and thoughtful; for in ſuch an hour as we think not, the Son of Man cometh!

But laſtly: A word of addreſs to the parents of thoſe children, who are proper objects of this charity, and receive the benefit: You can never be ſufficiently thankful for this admirable expedient. For you to be ungrateful herein, or unconcerned, whether your children duly attend at ſuch places, or not, will

make it appear you are ſtill in love with ignorance and vice; and that you have no more concern for them, than if they had been born without an immortal part; nor as much regard for their future welfare, as thoſe parents, who cauſed their ſons and daughters to paſs through the fire to Moloch!

Shall numbers of diſintereſted perſons, all over the kingdom, make large collections and proviſions, (ſparing neither coſt nor pains) for the preſent and future good of theſe your little-ones, whom you (by reaſon of low circumſtances, or a numerous family) are not able to educate? And muſt their charitable intentions be fruſtrated, and your children deprived of one of the greateſt temporal bleſſings they can enjoy! Never ſuffer your memories to be ſtained with ſuch unheard-of ingratitude.

Since the commencement of theſe ſchools, many and great complaints have been made againſt you, at various places, and, perhaps, not without ſufficient reaſon; one of which is, you ſeldom frequent thoſe ſchools, or places of worſhip, in which your children are thus educated, and by this wicked neglect, they will, undoubtedly, follow your example. Permit me, therefore, as a friend, to remind you of your duty: for, notwithſtanding the obligations you are under, to thoſe who have ſo largely contributed for their education; are you not as equally obligated to thoſe who have the care and good of them at heart; and conſtantly attend on the ſtated days, to teach and inſtruct them, in all the relative and ſocial duties, which their tender age has need of, and on which their preſent and future proſperity in a great meaſure depends?

But muſt I uſe ſtronger motives than theſe to move you? Need I lay open the feeling heart of a tender parent, and dive into the depth of nature for matter ſufficient to awaken you from this ſtupid lethargy? Well, then, deſcend with me, without fear or danger: I have ſix ſmall children myſelf, and (with the reſt of my poor brethren) am not able to get them ſufficiently educated, otherwiſe than at the *Sunday-School*. Now ſuppoſing I could give them none myſelf (which is the caſe with thouſands of parents)

neither would ſend, nor ſuffer them to go to theſe places, ſhould I not be as cruel as that mother, who would take the infant from her breaſt, and carry it into ſome lonely wood, and there leave it, to be the prey of devouring wild-beaſts? But I am aware, you will be ready to ſay, *This is not a ſimilar caſe:* But, I will anſwer, by another ſuppoſition, and prove that it is: Suppoſe I was now lying upon a bed of ſickneſs, and, to all appearance, near my awful exit; my children ſuppoſe, are all gathered round the bed of their expiring father: I caſt upon them my languid dying looks! Shocking reflection! Farewell, my dear children, I am going to leave you—expoſed to the corruptions of an evil heart—*(for you were ſhapen in iniquity, and in ſin did your mother conceive you)*—expoſed to a tempting devil—to a bewitching world—to the craft and ſubtilty of deſigning men. I am going to leave you—ignorant of the word of God, and conſequently of his law; and under its vindictive wrath: without any qualifications previous to a prudent paſſage thro' the dangerous ocean of a troubleſome world; and with ſuch a complication of bad habits, as (if grace prevent not) will bring you to ſhame and ignominy, if not to the gallows at laſt! And thoſe evils I might have endeavoured to prevent, but would not, though often admoniſhed to it by thoſe, who (out of mere good will) have taken upon them to inſtruct the riſing generation. Again, my dear children I bid you a final farewell. I muſt leave you: I am juſt launching into an awful eternity, and could be glad to bequeath to your tender minds, that wiſdom which would be uſeful to you in life, and your ſupport in the *valley of the ſhadow of death*; but it is too late! F-a-r-e-w-e-ll.

The laſt agonies of nature are over, and the mother and children are now wringing their hands, and lamenting in tears, round the inſenſible clay, crying, Alas! my huſband: Alas! my father. But the breathleſs body, having done with all tranſitory and worldly things, can adminiſter for them no more comfort or relief for ever. The widow and the fatherleſs continue together (we will ſuppoſe) a few mournful days longer, till the funeral ſolemnity is over, and then they are, perhaps, parted for ever. Some of them bound for ten, twelve or fourteen years, to unrea-

faithful maſters, who will take care they ſhall have as few opportunities as poſſible, for their improvement, either in learning or religion. Others of them are better provided for, and favoured with good places, and good maſters; yet, for want of proper diſcipline, in infancy, they are more inclined to rule than ſerve. The next news, to diſtreſs the poor mother, is, one of them is run away from his lawful maſter, and has liſted himſelf with a ſet of gamblers, ſhop-lifters, or high-way-men, in which moſt diabolical practice, he is likely to remain, (if not ſpeedily brought back) till juſtice overtakes him; and then, he is either expoſed to the ſevere laſhes of the whip, tranſported into ſome foreign land, or ends his few unfortunate days upon the tree. That this has often been the caſe, is too apparent to be denied; and if ſo, where is the difference between that cruel mother, who would expoſe her infant to the rage of wild-beaſts, and that undutiful father, who would entirely neglect the education of his children, ſeeing he has ſuch fair opportunities for doing it. If there is a ſpark of humanity in either of the breaſts of theſe two inhuman parents, the mother has it!

Do not elude the force of theſe arguments, by ſaying, *God is merciful; we leave them to the mercy of God, who will take care of them when we are gone.* That God is merciful, needs no further proof; but who have they to thank for that: Neither you nor me: the direct contrary has been evidently ſeen, by our neglect, in not doing our utmoſt to bring them to this mercy; that they might be made partakers thereof in the day of viſitation. Do you love your children? Could you wiſh them to avoid the temptations and ſnares of fornication; and the fatal conſequences of ſabbath-breaking, pilfering and ſtealing; and dying with ſhame and ignominy upon the gallows at laſt! O then! ſee to it, that you inſiſt upon them keeping the Sabbath-day holy. Follow them to their ſchools, and the public worſhip of God. See that they frequent theſe appointed places for their good, and pay a due reverence to, and becoming eſteem for their maſters and teachers. Have an eſpecial care over their morals, on the week-days. Set before them a good example. Encourage them in all their well-meant endeavours, for their improvement, in learning and virtue. Give no credit to their little tales, and falſe complaints. Suffer them to be moderately corrected for diſobedience. Frequent the throne of grace for ſucceſs in the undertaking: and, with the bleſſing of Almighty God upon them, they will be uſeful to their parents, beneficial to ſociety in general, and ornaments in their day and generation.

F I N I S.

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